

## **Inland Sports Volleyball Preview 2017-2018:**

Welcome to Inland Sports first season of covering High School volleyball. Before we look to the season ahead let's take a look back. Last season saw 4 teams reach finals weekend at Cerritos College (Elsinore-Div 3, Woodcrest Christian-Div 6, Notre Dame/Riverside-Div 7, and Lake Arrowhead Christian-Div 10). Unfortunately none of those teams brought home titles. 11 teams reached the state tournament from our area.

The Ambassador League was and looks to be one of our area's strongest leagues again this year. Last year Woodcrest Christian won the league at 13-1. The Royals were two matches clear of Loma Linda Academy at 11-3, Notre Dame/Riverside finished 10-4, and Ontario Christian was 9-5. In addition to two teams reaching section finals weekend at Cerritos College all four teams above made it to the state playoffs. In talking with head coach Paige Liebhart from Ontario Christian she expressed belief that the same type of success could be possible this year and that the league would be just as competitive. The biggest question will be for Woodcrest Christian and how head coach Teri James squad replaces SR Tesa Oaks who graduated with 1,913 kills (597 last year) in four years and moves on to California Baptist University along with setter Bree Hood who racked up nearly 900 assists.

### Players to Watch:

JR Ontario Christian Annika Jorgenson (520 kills .259% hitting percentage a season ago)  
SO Ontario Christian Selena Balderas (16.2 digs per match last year)  
JR Loma Linda Academy Demari Webb (491 kills .344% hitting percentage last year)  
JR Loma Linda Academy Hannah McKee (162 kills .313% hitting percentage, 5.3 assists/set)  
JR Notre Dame Trinity Wyscarver (326 kills .169% hitting percentage last year)  
SO Notre Dame  
SR Woodcrest Christian Emily White (132 kills .154% hitting percentage last year)  
JR Woodcrest Christian Raimi Albee (116 kills .118% hitting percentage last year)

In the Southwestern League this offseason saw three new head coaches appointed out of the six school league which covers Temecula & Murrieta. At Vista Murrieta Kristen Cooke (the program's founding coach) stepped down and is replaced by Ed Tatiano. Leanna Bush retired from Temecula Valley (the defending champions) and is replaced by Roberto "Rafu" Rodriguez. Finally at Murrieta Valley JD Miranda stepped away and is replaced by Ann Romero Parks.

During my feature with Temecula Valley's Jordyn Amoy she said that she expected the league to be a wide open race and that she believed no one would run the table like her squad did a year ago. Behind the Golden Bears this league was quite competitive as evidenced by 4-6 Great Oak reaching Division 1's quarterfinals before falling to Santa Margarita in a straight set sweep. Chaparral also recorded a win against Big 8 league champion Corona Santiago in the first round. All six programs also reached the postseason a year ago. Which was a feat not duplicated by any other league as far as I'm aware.

#### Players to Watch:

TV Peyton McBride 208 kills in 66 sets with a .255% hitting percentage

TV Madison Endsley 299 kills in 73 sets with a .290% hitting percentage

TV Jordyn Amoy 791 assists last season, verballed to Cal Poly San Luis Obispo

VM Lexi Hadrych 339 kills in 78 sets with a .225% hitting percentage, 35 aces, 197 digs

VM Marlee Nunley 197 kills in 78 sets with a .258% hitting percentage

VM Tiffany Pedersen Henry 166 kills in 74 sets with a .269% hitting percentage

Chap Kali Downs 320 kills in 93 sets played with a .360% hitting percentage

Chap Morgan Johnson 278 kills in 93 sets played with a .322% hitting percentage

In the Big 8 it looks to be a question of who can stop Corona Santiago? The Sharks dropped 3 sets in their entire league campaign from a season ago. They were pushed to 5 by King on the road and dropped a set to Norco in their second meeting. King was 8-2 a season ago followed by Roosevelt at 6-4 and Norco at 4-6 who got in thru an at-large bid. The preseason difficulty of schedule again is thru the roof as Santiago coach Courtney Krueger got 3 matches against the Southwestern League (@ Vista Murrieta on 9/6, Great Oak at home on 9/7, Murrieta Valley at home on 9/12), in addition to the Dave Mohs, Ayala, and Hudl tournaments. They will also host Ayala towards the end of September. King was able to get two matches against Southwestern League members Chaparral (away on 9/6) and Murrieta Valley (home on 9/14). In addition the Wolves are participating in September events at Ayala and the Dave Mohs event at Edison.

To again come out on top in the Big 8 Santiago will have to replace some pretty hefty numbers put up by Peyton Moore and Summer Hansen. Together the duo accounted for 301 kills (29.4% of total kills) and 744 of the team's 2,520 attempts (29.5%) for a combined .302% hitting percentage. As the chaser King needs to replace a combined 518 kills between Mikaela Grove and Sarah Hein. That duo combined for 51.5% of the Wolves kills a season ago and 50% of their team's (1,375 of 2,745) total attempts. Roosevelt looks to be in the best shape statistically with 3 players (Alexa Baker, Dejah Dade, and Haley Gomez) returning who recorded 100 or more kills in 60 sets minimum. The Big 8 also looks to rebound from a very difficult postseason as none of its schools won a postseason match. Something to note in Big 8 league competition is the start times. If a varsity match is played between Corona-Norco School District Members then it is set for a 5:30 start. When a Corona-Norco school plays King varsity is set for a 4:45pm start.

In San Bernardino County one of the top public school leagues is the Citrus Belt League. Last year Yucaipa took the crown followed by Citrus Valley, Cajon, and then Redlands. Only a late season loss by Citrus Valley to Redlands prevented a league co-championship. For Citrus Valley Claire Kovensky (the league's player of the year) graduated and moved onto the Air Force Academy. Behind her Danielle Lilley was the only player a season ago to average more than a kill per set. Setter McKenna Fink also graduated with 817 assists from a season ago. Sophomore Jacquelyn Barrett looks to fill the setter's spot. At Yucaipa Amber von Kaenel graduated the duo of Kayla Fisher & Natalie Hadder who combined for 316 kills, 69 blocks and

103 aces a season ago. The Thunderbirds still look to be in good shape with Marisa Holt and Katherine Bearie returning joined by setter Bethany Maksimuk. Coach Paula Boogie-Thomas and squad at Cajon have their work cut out of them as their top two offensive options graduated in Jalyn Hayes and Brooklyn Wilson who combined for 631 kills on 1,480 attempts. Natalie Gonzales leads the returners at 1.8 kills per set but no other returner was above 0.3 kills in a set. Redlands lost both first team selections Lauren Castro and Natalie Escher to graduation but does return Vashti-Elias Romero and Brooke Zamora.

In the Baseline League Chino Hills and Rancho Cucamonga shared a title at 9-1 with Los Osos and St Lucy's tying for 3rd at 5-5. The tiebreaker was a play in contest won by Los Osos 3-1. Alexis Cardoza & Kenzie Koerber (495 of the team's 790 kills) both graduated for the Huskies but setter Brooke Magill (648 assists a season ago) returns. At Rancho Cucamonga 535 of the team's 1,090 kills graduated between Sydney Culpepper and Bria Beale. Karson Bacon who averaged 3.3 kills per set while hitting .401% returns. Allison Casillas averaged 1.1 kills per set while hitting .239% and Brooke Madkin had right at 1 kill per set hitting .264%. Setter Mary Bagshaw does also graduate with 707 assists in her final campaign. Coach Taylor Galliano's squad at Los Osos graduated two seniors from last year's team and is looking to make it a three team race in the Baseline League.

#### 2017-2018 Divisions:

**Div 1:** Chaparral, Great Oak, Murrieta Valley, Rancho Cucamonga, Temecula Valley

**Div 2:** Chino Hills, Claremont, King, Los Osos, Corona/Santiago, Yucaipa

**Div 3:** Chino Hills/Ayala, Cajon, Citrus Valley, Elsinore, Murrieta Mesa, Norco, Redlands East Valley, Roosevelt, St.Lucy's

**Div 4:** Corona/Centennial, AB Miller, Redlands, Upland

**Div 5:** Alta Loma, Carter, Corona, Eisenhower, Hemet, JW North, Poly/Riverside, Rancho Verde, Rim, Valley View, Woodcrest Christian

**Div 6:** Aquinas, Beaumont, Chino, Heritage, Hillcrest, Loma Linda Academy, Ontario Christian, Notre Dame/Riverside, Paloma Valley, Rialto, Fontana Summit, Temescal Canyon, La Sierra

**Div 7:** Arlington, Banning, Colony, Fontana, Jurupa Hills, Jurupa Valley, Lakeside, Moreno Valley, Patriot, Perris, Ramona/Riverside, San Jacinto, Tahquitz, Vista Del Lago, Hemet/West Valley

**Div 8:** Arrowhead Christian, Bloomington, Canyon Springs, Citrus Hill, Grand Terrace, Linfield Christian, Norte Vista, Ontario, Rubidoux, San Bernardino, San Gorgonio, Temecula Prep, Upland Christian Academy, Western Christian

**Div 9:** California Lutheran/Wildomar, Calvary Murrieta, Chaffey, Colton, Indian Springs, Kaiser, La Sierra Academy, Lake Arrowhead Christian, Mesa Grande Academy, NuView Bridge, Rancho Christian, San Jacinto Valley Academy, Santa Rosa Academy

**Div 10:** Academy/Careers & Exploration, Apple Valley Christian, Bethel Christian/Riverside, Bloomington Christian, California Military Institute, California School for the Deaf/Riverside, Calvary Chapel/Moreno Valley, Carnegie, Cornerstone Christian/Wildomar, Crossroads Christian/Corona, Excelsior Charter, Grove/Redlands, Hesperia Christian, Lucerne Valley, Noli Indian, Orange Vista, Packinghouse Christian Academy, Public Safety Academy, Redlands Adventist, River Springs Charter/Temecula, Riverside County Education Academy, Sherman Indian, Silver Valley, Victor Valley Christian

### **Other Stories to Watch:**

1. Elsinore-The Tigers were division 4 runners up a season ago. They currently are on a 30 match Sunbelt League winning streak and have won the last 14 Sunbelt League titles.
2. Beaumont-The Cougars won a league title for the first time since 1985 and made it to the Division 6 quarterfinals before falling to Santa Ynez in 5 sets.
3. New faces in new places- At least 4 of the area's premier jobs have new head coaches (3 alone in the Southwestern League). Who will have the best year among rookie head coaches?  
Roberto "Rafu" Rodriguez: Temecula Valley  
Ed Tatiano: Vista Murrieta  
Ann Romero-Parks: Murrieta Valley  
James Burnham: Riverside/Poly
4. Earlier start- The CIF-SS regular season and playoffs start about a week earlier than a season ago. For some coaches this means greatly reduced practice time because of how their dead period falls. August 21 is when teams can schedule their first allowable contest and October 24 is when everything must be completed regular season wise.